1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

462 collects fruits and digs up roots with her digging stick; she catches prawns and crabs and small fish with her small fishing net; she provides the firewood and the water of the family and does the cooking (i.e. the family cooking, but not the common cooking, which is entirely done by men); she makes all such objects as baskets, nets of thread, and personal ornaments either for herself or her husband.

888 623 There is no organised government in an Andamanese village. The affairs of the community are regulated entirely by the older men and women. The younger members of the community are brought up to pay respect to their elders and to submit to them in many ways. It has already been shown how, in the distribution of food, the elders get the best share. When it is a question of shifting camp to some better hunting ground the opinion of the older men would weigh against that of the younger if they disagreed. It must not be thought, however, that the older men are tyrannical or selfish. I only once heard a young man complain of the older men getting so much the best of everything. The respect for seniority is kept alive partly by tradition and partly by the fact that the older men have had a greater experience than the younger. It could probably not be maintained if it regularly gave rise to any tyrannical treatment of the younger by the elder.

888 576 The respect for seniors is shown in the existence of special terms of address which men and women use when speaking to their elders. In the languages of the North Andaman there are two such terms, *Mai* or *Maia*, applied to men, with a meaning equivalent to "Sir," and *Mimi*, applied to women. These words may be used either alone or prefixed to the personal name of the person addressed. A younger man speaking to an older one whose name was *Bora* would address him either as *Mai* (Sir), or as *Maia Bora* (Sir Bora).

In the tribes of the South Andaman there are exactly similar terms. In the *Aka-Bea* tribe *Maia* or *Maiola* is used in addressing men and *Čana* or *Čanola* in speaking to women. In *Akar-Bale* the equivalent terms are *Da* and *In*. Besides these terms there is in these tribes another, *Mam*, *Mama* or *Mamola*, which may be used in speaking to either men or women, and which

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

implies a higher degree of respect than *Maia* or *Čana*. In these tribes also there is a special way of showing respect by adding the suffix *-la* to the name of the person addressed, as *Bia*, *Biala*, *Woičo*, *Woičo-la*, etc.

In the legends of the Andamanese these titles are nearly always prefixed to the names of the legendary ancestors, as *Maia Jutpu* and *Mimi Biliku* in *Aka-Jeru*, or *Da Duku* and *In Bain* in *Akar-Bale*. The moon is similarly spoken of as Sir Moon (*Maia Ogar* in *Aka-Bea*) and the sun as Lady Sun (*Čana Bodo*).

Besides the respect for seniority there is another important factor in the regulation of the social life, namely the respect for certain personal qualities. These qualities are skill in hunting and in warfare, generosity and kindness, and freedom from bad temper. A man possessing them inevitably acquires a position of influence in the community. His opinion on any subject carries more weight than that of another even older man. The younger men attach themselves to him, are anxious to please him by giving him any presents that they can, or by helping him in such work as cutting a canoe, and to join him in hunting parties or turtle expeditions. In each local group there was usually to be found one man who thus by his influence could control and direct others. Amongst the chief men of several friendly local groups it would generally happen that one of them, by reason of his personal qualities, would attain to a position of higher rank than the others. Younger men would be desirous of joining the local group to which he belonged. He would find himself popular and respected at the annual meetings of the different groups, and his influence would thus spread beyond the narrow limits of his own small community.

There was no special word to denote such men and distinguish them from others. In the languages of the North Andaman they were spoken of as *er-kuro* = "big."

Such men might perhaps be spoken of as "chiefs," but the term is somewhat misleading, as it makes us think of the organised chieftainship of other savage races.

The above statement is not quite in agreement with what has been written by Mr Man on the same subject, and what he

2: Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

occasion "they brought in some escaped convicts, whom, however, they first plundered, besides removing every bit of iron from the boat in which they had escaped. On being taxed with this they at first pleaded surprise, then said they would make restitution, and brought a canoe as an exchange for the mischief they had done to the government boat. At first this was not quite understood and the canoe was sent back, but they returned it next day, explaining that they desired it to be kept as a reimbursement for the injury they had done to the government boat, so no longer considered the canoe theirs."

4. As another example of the same kind:—when the present penal colony at Port Blair was first established, the aborigines were observed to refrain from shooting at any of the chain-gang prisoners, evidently judging that they at least could not be voluntary invaders of their territory, and to confine their hostility to the petty officers and others not in chains, till these at last, finding themselves in constant danger, sought and obtained permission to carry on their duties in fetters.[1]

5. Much mutual affection is displayed in their social relations, and, in their dealings with strangers, the same characteristic is observable when once a good understanding has been established.

6. It is a noteworthy trait, and one that deserves high commendation, that every care and consideration are paid by all classes to the very young, the weak, the aged, and the helpless, and these, being made special objects of interest and attention, invariably fare better in regard to the comforts and necessaries of daily life than any of the otherwise more fortunate members of the community.

7. Andamanese children are reproved for being impudent and forward, but discipline is not enforced by corporal punish-

[1] It may not be unworthy of notice to record here yet another instance of generosity of disposition displayed by one of these savages. In January, 1877, a party of 24 *Bâli* convicts effected their escape: all but some 11 or 12 were soon re-captured. Those still at large proved desperate, showing by their murderous assault on some aborigines, who had unconsciously approached their hiding place in the jungle, that they were prepared to resist capture at all hazards. The chief "*mânsâi*" *.bi'ela* (*vide* Plate II, fig. 2) thereupon headed a party of his tribe and some policemen, and, in spite of the parched condition of the soil—it being then late in February—succeeded in tracking the runaways, who had penetrated several miles into an unfrequented part of the jungle. Refusing to surrender themselves they were attacked, with the result that all were either captured or shot down. On being asked by the Chief Commissioner what reward would be most acceptable for the service the aborigines had performed on this occasion, *.bi'ela* replied that he would prefer to anything else that the Chief Commissioner should remit the remaining portion of the six months' sentence passed on four members of a Middle Andaman tribe, who, a few months before, had been convicted of shooting, at Kyd Island, some Chinamen engaged in collecting edible birds' nests. The prisoners were almost unknown to *.bi'ela*, and their release, therefore, could no more have concerned him personally than did their punishment. His request was granted.

372 they show much skill in so carrying smouldering logs with them by land or sea that they are not extinguished. Their ignorance of this fundamental requirement of civilization is shown in their fire-legend that fire was originally stolen from their deity Puluga and has never been allowed to become extinct since. Excepting guns, nothing has more impressed the Andamanese with European power and resources than the use of matches, *i.e.*, of making fire whenever required with ease.

342 In the Little Andaman and among the Jarawas of the South Andaman, large permanent huts for use in the wet season are built up of solid materials to 30 feet in height and 60 in breadth to hold the fires of 7 to 8 hunting parties, say 60 to 70 people, *i.e.*, they contain 7 to 8 fires with about 8 persons to each "fire." The Jarawa hunting camp is much the same as that of any other Andamanese and his great communal hut is built on the same principle as the larger huts of the other Andamanese.

The use of the flimsy hunting shelters and camp huts of the Andamanese is rendered possible in the wet and stormy weather so common in the Islands by the denseness of the jungle, which prevents the winds from reaching them even when close to the sea-beach and causes the rain to fall vertically upon them.

619 **Government.**—There is no idea of Government, but to each tribe and to
622 each sept of it there is a recognised head, who has attained that position by tacit agreement on account of some admitted superiority, mental or physical, and commands a limited respect and such obedience as the self interest of the other individual men of the tribe or sept dictates. There is a tendency to
[554] hereditary right in the natural selection of chiefs, but there is no social status that is not personally acquired. The social position of a chief's family follows that of the chief himself and admits of many privileges in the shape of tribal influence and immunity from drudgery. His wife is among women what he is
[888] among men and at his death, if a mother and not young, she retains his privileges. Age commands respect and the young are deferential to the elders. Offences, *i.e.*, murder, theft, adultery, mischief, assault, are punished by the
627 aggrieved party on his own account by injury to the body and property or by murder, without more active interference on the part of others than is consistent with their own safety, and without any fear of consequences except vengeance from the friends of the other side, and even this is usually avoided by disappearance till the short memory of the people has obliterated wrath.

421 Property is communal, as is all the land, and ideas as to individual possessions are but rudimentary, accompanied with an incipient tabu of the property belonging to a chief. An Andamanese will often readily part with ornaments to any one who asks for them. Theft, or the taking of property without leave, is only recognised as to things of absolute necessity, as arrows, pig's flesh, fire.
437 A very rude barter exists between tribes of the same group in regard to articles not locally obtainable or manufactured. This applies especially to cooking pots, which are made of a special clay found only in certain parts of the islands. The barter is really a gift of one article in expectation of another of assumed corresponding value in return, and a row if it is not forthcoming. The territory of other tribes is carefully respected without however there being any fixed boundaries.

562 The duties of men and women are clearly defined by custom, but not so as to make that of the women comparatively hard. The women have a tacitly acknowledged inferior position, but it is not such as to be marked or to leave them without influence.

771 **Religion.**—The religion is simple animism and consists of fear of the evil spirits of the wood, the sea, disease and ancestors, and of avoidance of acts traditionally displeasing to them, and this in spite of an abundance of mythological tales told in a confused, disjointed manner that is most instructive to the student of such things. There is neither ceremonial worship nor propitiation. There is an anthropomorphic deity, Puluga, the cause of all things, whom it is not, however, necessary to propitiate, though sins, *i.e.*, acts displeasing to him, are avoided for fear of damage to the products of the jungle. Puluga dwells now in the sky, but used to live on the top of Saddle Peak, their highest mountain. The Andamanese have an idea that the "soul" will go under the earth by an aerial bridge after death, but there is no heaven nor hell nor any idea of a ser-

6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

and therefore dangerous to offend by cooking them. Luckily they accepted fish of almost every description, and vegetables. To convince them of our good intentions concerning their food, at Port Blair an Onge observer was stationed permanently near the kitchen to watch the preparation of meals. Nevertheless, within a few days all 30 Onge fell ill as a consequence of the different food and climate. In their island they sleep, completely naked and uncovered, lying directly on beds made of rough branches. Their only precaution, as I mentioned before, is to keep a fire permanently burning close to the bed. This was not feasible in the rooms with wooden floors that were provided for them in Port Blair, and blankets did not avail. So the 30 Onge developed a fever and we were obliged to take them urgently back to Little Andaman, where they promptly recovered. The incident gave me a further opportunity to observe the curative methods of the Onge.

With regard to their care to avoid illness from food, I must point out the fact that misleading information has been published on the subject even in reputed papers on the Andamans. I will discuss them in my Onge book, but I wish here to briefly stress a few points: the Onge, and the present residual coastal or forest Andamanese, refuse to eat – besides birds and fish such as shark, ray, eel or mutraenae – some other animals such as paradoxurus, bats, rats, varanus and snakes. The contrary is affirmed in those papers. To quote the well-known book by A. R. RADCLIFFE-BROWN ("The Andaman Islanders", pp. 37, 91 and 399), all Andaman Islanders, including the Onge, consider the above-mentioned species edible. Varanus is supposed to be acceptable for its lustful habits that make of it an aphrodisiac. My direct and protracted experience both in Little and in Great Andaman compels me to state that such information is false. It is true, however, that the Andaman Islanders believe they acquire some of the properties of their devoured victims. This occurs only if the animals are cut up alive. Therefore turtles, pigs and dugongs are cruelly sectioned while still alive, and the Onge also believe that their health and energy profit by it. Cannibalism may be founded on such beliefs, but it is completely unknown to Andaman Islanders of all times and places. Young sucking-pigs are avoided, as foul, by men, and even withheld from the dogs; but the Onge are partial to other things which, in our opinion, are far worse: crickets, and the fat larvae of coleoptera that collect in tree trunks.

Without giving here a full list of the foods that are considered harmful or curative, I shall add just a few remarks on the subject. The healthiest, as well as the tastiest part of the pig is supposed to be the kidney and its surrounding fat. It is offered to old or distinguished people, as a sign of favour. As I helped the Onge, as much as possible, with gifts of tools and medicines, they found it complimentary to name me after their favourite titbit, intending thereby to honour me as a friend and healer. By such a name I came to be known in Little Andaman, and this made my work easier. In the Onge language the word for kidney fat is *ew-chaugidgid*; I was delighted with it, for it proclaimed the high esteem I was held in by my Onge friends.

Foods considered healthy by the Onge include honey, yams, several succulent roots and the fat of turtle and dugong. Pteropus, a giant but very